

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A sealing joint comprising an external metal casing (1) and a flexible internal structure, ~~characterised in that the internal structure is being~~ made of flexible strips (8, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d), overlaid and separated by supports (9, 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d), the supports located on either side of the strips being staggered, wherein the strips are spring plates having an elastic limit, and the supports comprise blocks which are laid out in rows, the rows extending in a first direction which is perpendicular to the strips, the blocks occupying such that each block occupies every other space between the strips and in a direction perpendicular to the rows and wherein the blocks are along the rows and being present at every second row in a second direction which is parallel to the strips, the sealing joint being compressible until the spring plates come to mutual contact between pairs of the supports below the elastic limit.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that some of the supports, which belong to a pair of layers nearest to the casing, extend under projections (6) positioned on an external surface of the casing.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 2, characterised in that the supports and the projections are linear.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are distinct, with a closed outline.

Claim 5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): The sealing joint set forth in claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1 further comprising at least one ring ~~rings each~~ connecting together a plurality of said ~~which are~~ the blocks ~~located between a respective pair of flexible strips.~~

Claim 7 (currently amended): The sealing joint set forth in claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are made in metal, ceramic or alloy with oxide dispersion.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A sealing joint comprising an external metal casing having a flexible internal structure made of flexible, corrugated flexible strips, the strips contacting at support points located on either side of the strip being staggered wherein the support points occupy every other space between the strips.

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are concentric.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are circular and flat.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the supports radiate.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the supports are concentric rings with differing radii.

Claim 14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 8, characterised in that the flexible strips are concentric.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 8, characterised in that the flexible strips are circular and flat.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The sealing joint set forth in claim [[14]] 8, characterised in that the supports radiate.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The sealing joint set forth in claim [[14]] 8, characterised in that the supports are concentric rings with differing radii.

Claim 19 (New): A sealing joint comprising an external metal casing (1) and a flexible internal structure, the internal structure being made of flexible strips (8a, 8b, 8c, 8d) overlaid and separated by supports (9, 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d), the supports located on either side of the strips being staggered, wherein the strips are spring plates having an elastic limit, and the supports comprise blocks which are laid out in rows, the blocks each contacting two of the plates, the rows extending in a first direction which is perpendicular to the strips, the blocks occupying every other space between the strips along the rows and being present at every second row in a second direction which is parallel to the strips, the sealing joint being compressible until the spring plates come to mutual contact between pairs to the supports below the elastic limit.

Claim 20 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that some of the supports, which belong to a pair of layers nearest to the casing, extend under projections (6) positioned on an external surface of the casing.

Claim 21 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 20, characterised in that the supports and the projections are linear.

Claim 22 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are distinct, with a closed outline.

Claim 23 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, further comprising at least one ring connecting together a plurality of said blocks.

Claim 24 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are made in metal, ceramic or alloy with oxide dispersion.

Claim 25 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are concentric.

Claim 26 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are circular and flat.

Claim 27 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the supports radiate.

Claim 28 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the supports are concentric rings with differing radii.

Claim 29 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the internal structure is an assembly of at least two flexible strips.

Claim 30 (new): A sealing joint comprising an external metal casing having a flexible internal structure made of flexible, corrugated flexible strips, the strips contacting at support points located on either side of the strip being staggered wherein the support points occupy every other space between the strips and the support points each contact two of the strips.

Claim 31 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 30, characterised in that the flexible strips are concentric.

Claim 32 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 30, characterised in that the flexible strips are circular and flat.

Claim 33 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 30, characterised in that the supports radiate.

Claim 34 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 30, characterised in that the supports are concentric rings with differing radii.

Claim 35 (new): The sealing joint set forth in claim 30, characterised in that the flexible internal structure is an assembly of at least two flexible, corrugated flexible strips.